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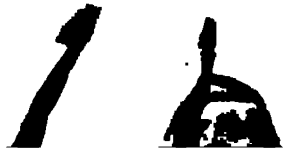

THE MINSTREL'S TALE.

THE MINSTREL'S TALE,

And Other Poems.

BY GEORGE MOORE.

"Dejectedly and low he bow'd,
And gazing timid on the crowd,
He seem'd to seek in every eye,
If they approved his minstrelsy."

SCOTT.

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PREFACE.

THE operations of the human mind are ever worthy our study, for by the various connexions of being, we are interested in whatever developes the character, or influences the heart. By the expression of others' feelings, we are enabled to form a judgement of our own; and whatever awakens a sympathy within us must tend to invigorate the intellectual faculties, and expand the sphere of our existence; blending soul with soul into one undivided being, having gratifications ever equal to the growing grasp of its conceptions.

Education is but sympathy—a sense of others feelings and ideas, stimulating the dormant susceptibilities of our hearts and minds; and begetting, not merely, imitation, but a similarity of sentiment, by which we really become new and improved creatures, provided the innate tendencies be properly directed.

The author therefore places his reputation, with perfect confidence, in the power of those who can perceive the purity of his intention, and although

there are critics who will rejoice to mangle the first production of early aspirations, the injury will be forgotten in the heart-hid satisfaction of pleasing one who reverences virtue, and is not out of love with nature and benevolence.

Being aware that the public will not consider the circumstances under which some of the pieces were composed, as an extenuation of their imperfections, nor the youthfulness of the author as an excuse for his errors, he does not endeavour to seek shelter from dishonour by pleading either.

The partial generosity of valued friends, whose encouragement induced him to publish, will ever be acknowledged with gratitude; and, even if disappointment attend his efforts, he remembered with complacent pleasure, as a flattering testimony of approval, from persons whose talents are as superior, as their esteem is desirable.

Poetry must reveal its own meaning—but, as this work may fall into the hands of individuals who cannot perceive meaning where they feel no interest, it may be observed that the princip. object of the leading poem was to prove the impropriety of allowing morbid sensibility to tyrannize over manly sentiments, while robbing the heart of rest, and the mind of reason.

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THE MINSTREL'S TALE.

SERENELY bright, the eve of day
Smiles on creation's rich array,
And blended scenes of sea and land
Around the ravish'd eye expand;
Where I was wont full oft to wander,
O'er memory's retrospect to ponder.
My last poetic ramble there,
With passion'd thoughts impress'd my heart,
And woke such deathless feelings rare,
As never—never, can depart.

I saw a bark, with gentle pride,
Magnificent in beauty, glide
Upon the heaven-reflecting tide;
And like a living thing appearing,
In gladness walking on the wave,
A placid glow of smiles it gave:
As if some influence endearing,
Had made it love a scene so cheering.
It pass'd away; another came,
Which, on the ocean's glorious verge,
Seem'd, sprite-like, slowly, to emerge
From the horizon's clouds of flame,
Resting on the slumb'ring surge.
While these gay scenes evanish'd fast,
This fancy o'er my spirit pass'd:—

The blandishments of hope decay,
Like the pure glories of the day;
And all that's *earthly* of delight,
As evening's tissue, fades away,
In disappointment's gloomy night.

Meand'ring minstrels love to stray,
Beneath still twilight's glimmering ray,
To commune with the source of song,
In thoughts that glow with feeling strong;
And there was one in silence musing
O'er heavenly themes sublimely sweet;
And God's own volume fair perusing,
While his rapt spirit soar'd to meet
Fresh gleams of glory from the throne
Of him th' *Eternal Secret One:*—

For oh! how beautifully grand!
How wond'rous in unseen command!
How strange, how vast, profound, and high,
Is Nature's sacred majesty!
The soul-expanding worship wings
The spirit o'er created things,—
And, shunning shadows, grasps at him,
Whose glory renders brightness dim;
Whose thought is power, which lives through space,
And fills his boundless dwelling place.
For in yon heaven, as in this earth,
His will gives endless being birth,
And guides and governs, as their soul,
Worlds beyond worlds, that silent roll,
Through quick infinitude extending,
Without beginning—never ending.—

But on the list'ning ear of night,
A murmur'd echo faintly fell,
As if some melancholy sprite
Breathed forth a wordless mystic spell.—
And who is he, with tearful eye,
And pallid cheek, and lofty brow,
And jetty curls?—a heart-fraught sigh
Pants from his bursting bosom now.
Hark! hear you not his lab'ring breast
Breathe forth its burthen to the breeze—
Rest thee, faint wand'ring mourner rest,
Behold a bower beneath the trees.—
Ah! it is known to thee, and there,
The stranger minstrel lists thy strain,—
He may perchance thy sorrows share,
While thus thy tender words complain
Of that which drench'd thy soul with pain.

"And must I ne'er again behold
The form I still adore?
Ah no—wrapp'd in the grave so cold,
She suns my soul no more.

"Thy faith was firm, thy love was true,
And boundless as mine own;
And shall we never more renew
The bliss which we have known?

"We shall; though now, in realms above,
Thou breathest a purer sky.
To live in thine eternal love,
I only wait—to die."

"Hear'st thou the sorrows that I speak?
See'st thou the tears which stain my cheek?

O yes, thou see'st, thou hear'st; and thou
Forbid'st my heart to doubt, or bow."
But here the stranger minstrel spoke,
And thus abruptly on him broke;—
"I do;—doubt not—for God above
Is in himself the soul of love.—
Man should not mourn,—you need not start,—
You form'd an idol for your heart,
And it is gone; a child might mourn
A toy but newly from it torn.
Tell me your tale, nor thus forget
That earth may hold some comfort yet."

Awhile in silence both remain'd;
But soon the startled mourner gain'd
A kind of confidence, that cheer'd
His midnight soul, though still he fear'd

To trust a stranger;—manly grief
In secret passion spurns relief.
But further sympathy, express'd
In words of kindness, soothing came,—
Like Pity's voice, too mild to blame,
Or add to woe a sense of shame:
The mourner then his soul confess'd,
And thus that timely friend address'd.—

"As when some sweet benignant star
Bursts the black clouds, and beams from far,
Upon a tempest-shatter'd crew,
Their life-hope struggle to renew;
So on my soul a cheering gleam
Of kindness fain would almost seem
To promise e'en a wretch like me
A brighter sky, and smoother sea.

"There is a pleasure with that pain,
Which prompts the soul to own its feeling,
When mem'ry mourns the transient reign
Of dawning joys and visions vain;
When shades of sorrow are concealing
Aught that holds a brightness still
To warm the heart, illume the eye,
Or raise a flutt'ring wish to fill
The darkened vacuum of the will,
Or gender hopes, again to fly,
Like meteors, o'er a sullen sky.

"The cypress planted near the tomb,
Where lies a loved-one's slumb'ring dust,
In peaceful sadness, sheds a gloom
O'er the pale marble's sacred trust;

And sighs with hollow dreary sound,
When winds their wild command assume,
And o'er the seeming groaning ground
Hurl leaves, and flowers of spring's best bloom.—
My mem'ry such, and such the power
That racks my soul in misery's hour.

"Now though unsuitable it be,
My own misfortunes to narrate,
You still must grant, that surely he
Who felt their force can best relate;
But still, the story of my sorrows,
An interest of feeling borrows
From ties of circumstance and place,
Beyond the bounds of selfish sadness:
And with slight touch I will retrace

The early steps of Nature's gladness,
Ere Hope's bright blossoms all were blighted,
Which from the youthful fancy grew;
And all, that e'er a soul delighted
With fairy visions, ever knew:
Within the backward scene I see
The glory of the gushing flood
Of raptures rich, that seem'd to be
The promise of eternal good.
Ah! who can say, or who e'er saw,
The danger of such daring dreams,
As minds of fire must madly know,
Which, like the lightning's glaring gleams,
Careering in the startled night,
With thunder deep'ning as it rolls,
May give sublimity's own light,
To beings of poetic souls.

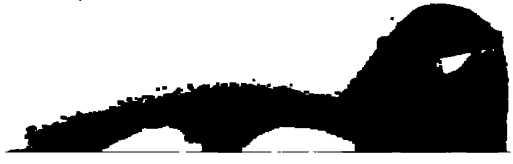
The spirit-fire's electric force—
In its mysterious light-like course,
Displays the same sublime careering,—
All its brightness, all its veering,
All its power, as strange, or stranger,
All its wildness, all its danger;
The fierce red flame's confounding crash
Seems to rend the earth asunder;
The sudden sound, and startling flash,
Fill all they *spare* with dread and wonder.

The fitful tempests of the mind
Leave far more horrid wrecks behind,
Than warring elements of fire,
And flood, and storm, when all conspire
To shake creation in their ire.

'As disappointments on me met,
See sadness settled on my brow;
Though years have not prepared it yet
For *all* that makes the spirit bow—
There is a freshness on it now;
But not a freshness which is felt—
Reflection long within has dwelt,
And when I listless stroll the fields,
Nor sight, nor sound, nor breeze, e'er yields
The buoyant bliss of careless life,
To snatch me from my spirit's strife.
O'er yonder hills, whence flow soft rays,
With radiance clothing all around,
Oft have I walked in happier days,
And glow'd with life in rapture found;
And many an eve, when earth and sky

Were all enchantment to the eye,
In heavenly hues of every dye,
Has my glad soul the tints partook,
Of that on which the eye did look,
And while conceiving all of heaven,
Forgot that *Care* to *man* was given.

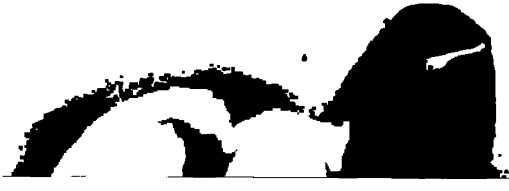
"Soft was the scene, and scarce a motion
Disturb'd the burnish'd breast of ocean,
And glory trembled on the sight,
Reflected from celestial light;—
When forth I wander'd to express,
In consciousness of sweet controul,
That wordless worship of the soul,
Whose source and end is happiness.
Oh, once I tasted bliss supreme!



For life's first freshness was confess'd
In one deranged continued dream,
By Fancy and by Passion dress'd
With all delusive loveliness:
On it the mind will often rest,
And wait not e'en for Hope to bless,
Though tears she may not now suppress.
O thoughts, how exquisite are ye
When Fancy cheats fond Memory!
It is as if the damn'd could see
Through hell's black concave into heaven,
And, fix'd in gaze, transported be,
'Till all its bliss to them were given.
On this loved spot I lingering stray'd,
Till eve's rich robe of light decay'd,
And solemn night serenely threw

His dusky pinions o'er the earth,
And from their surface sprinkled dew,
As through the air he calmly flew,
Bringing peculiar charms to birth.—

"The sky from cloud was free,
The moon was brightly beaming
Soft splendour on the sea,
Which in repose was seeming,
As its glad waves were dreaming,
So glorious was the gleaming
Their gentle tremor made;
And many a star was streaming
A ray athwart the glade;
And all the scene was teeming
With mingling light and shade:



No breeze that night did blow—
No motion save the sea's—
And streamlet's quiet flow:
In ocean, earth, or air,
Was seen no living thing;
But Rapture's self was there,
In my imagining.

"At such a solitary time,
The soul above terrestrials soars;
And with serenity sublime,
In pure devotion's dread ecstasies
The depth of darkness that conceals
Creation's charm from vagrant thought;
And while Imagination feels
Confounded with the spirit caught

From meditation's holy fire,
On wings of wonder will aspire,
Till, resting on *Unceasing Might*,
The soul is overwhelm'd in light.

"Unto my startled ear a sigh
Betray'd a burthen'd bosom nigh;
For though alone I seem'd to be,
There yet was one who deem'd that he,
Unheard, unnoticed, lived to look,
Till of the scene his soul partook;
And swelling with diviner sway,
As if it could no longer brook
Confinement in a thing of clay,
Pour'd forth this sweet soliloquy
Unto the list'ning night and me.

" 'O holy Moon, whose heavenly rays
Beaming on the breast of ocean,
Illuminate the soul, and raise
The spirit of devotion;
Thy magic smile enchants the scene,
And makes the mind, like thee, serene.

" 'I gaze upon thy tranquil power,
Amid the azure arch above,
Where countless gems of glory shower
A lustre like the eyes of love—
To render distant worlds as this,
Or fit them for abodes of bliss!

" 'I gaze in ecstacy supreme,
Till Fancy wafts me to thy sphere,

And in Imagination's dream,
The worlds of light afar appear
A calmly glowing canopy
Of seraphs still admiring thee.

" 'While yet one sense alone can live,
And all the soul seems form'd to see;
While every object smiles to give
A flood of feeling warm and free;
Filling each void of heart and mind,
Nor leaving memory behind.

" 'While yet fair Nature seems to feel
A visionary slumber seize
Each portion of her power, and steal,
Like perfume, on the fainting breeze;

And aspen leaves in stillness sleep,
And silence settles on the deep:—

" 'There is a strange creative might,
A world directing influence,
That gives to thought its instant flight,
And on its wing transports me hence,
Beyond the visible extent
Of that pure star-roof'd firmament.

" 'O Mind of minds! to thee, to thee,
Whatever is directs the soul;
Thy Secret Mightiness, we see,
Conceives and regulates the whole:—
O, overwhelm'd in worship now,
Let all my being to thee bow!' "

"Oft had my soul with fervour pray'd
To find a friend with such a heart,
Who might my mental struggles aid,
And in each passion take a part.

"O child of thought, who lonely livest
Within thy own creative mind,
If with no feeling friend thou givest
The interchange of joys refined;
O dare not, dare not to express,
To aught but Nature, the excess
Of love and pleasure she inspires,—
Thy ecstacies but few can feel;
O dare not, dare not to reveal
The surging ocean of desires,
Bounding and boiling in thy breast,

O'er which thy thought may dove-like flee,
But bring no olive-leaf to thee,
To promise e'en a hope of rest.
O dare not, dare not to confess
Nor wish, nor woe, nor happiness;
The world will worry thee with fears,
And break thy heart with soul-less sneers.

"We saunter'd in the calm moonlight,
With converse suited to that night,
Such as accordant spirits feel,
Who know not aught they would conceal.
But the next eve—O Memory, why
Wilt thou but live to prompt the sigh?
Why, when Imagination glows,
And sheds oblivion o'er my woes—

Why wilt thou burst upon her dream,
And prove earth's joys but merely *seem*?

"The eve I speak of is not past,—
It lives as long as life can last;—
Then, then, an image of desire
Was graven on my heart with fire;—
Then, then, the demon of despair
Sat laughing at my rapture there:
For soon, he knew, his blasting breath
Would scathe my soul with *living* death;—
Then, then, the lightning of a look,
Its course athwart my spirit took,
And flashing, dazzling, darting flew,
Until wild thoughts, like thunder too,
As if reverberating, shook
My frantic nerves with feelings new.

Perchance eternity may take
Pain from the eve of which I spake.

"Then first my spirit felt the flame,
That roused each feeling, and became
A secret energy, a part
Of every passion of my heart—
A deep intensity, the source
Of dreadless fury to their force.

Amid a calm embow'ring spot,
Sweetly secluded is that cot,
Where piety with peace might dwell,
And bid anxiety farewell:
If piety on earth could rest,
To render blessed and be blest.

Its clay-built walls with ivy clad,
From distant view seem darkly sad;
But when within the flowery nook,
The perfumed air redeems that look,
For glowing roses blush so brightly,
And silent forms there breathe so lightly,
Not the fairies on the blossoms
Feel them heave their beauteous bosoms;
The silver flowers of jess'mine peep,
Like stars reflected on the deep,
And honey'd woodbine climbing round,
Trails from the windows to the ground,
Luxuriant in its careless neatness,
With buds of various bloom and sweetness.
The polish'd poplar palely green,
And formal fir, and ash serene,
Mid which the sturdy oak is seen,

Thickly entwining branch with bough,
Mantle the hills from base to brow;
Except one barren rock—a rude
And cheerless mass of solitude.
All these beauties richly blent
In shapes and shades magnificent,
Acquire such mellow tints of light,
To charm and cheat the raptured sight,
When tranquil evening's glorious train
Glows over heav'n, and earth, and main,
That, fraught with ecstacy, each sense
Is lost in pure intelligence;
For nought to come, and nothing past,
Is thought of while such moments last.
The thrush, with his impassion'd lay,
Warbled from the loftiest spray,

Appears to feel his tune above
All but true happiness and love;
And to the ocean, bright between
The woody headlands of the scene,
Moaning flows the modest river,
Seeming to say 'twould linger ever.
I speak as if these beauties were
Still mingling magically there,
Though now, alas! that murm'ring stream
Is as the mem'ry of a dream,
Recalling raptures that are o'er,
To make their absence torture more.
In speechless woe, when others sleep,
Oft must I wander there to weep;—
O ask not why I love that place,
Or why I strive its charms to trace;

Or why I drop a fruitless tear
O'er fancies now so vainly dear:
There dwelt the friend who form'd my soul
And ruled me with unthought controul,
And she whose charms enchanted me,
And all I saw,—and all I see,—
That tender being I ador'd,
And unto whom my spirit pour'd
A homage too sincere to give,
A promise on which Hope could *live*:-
But all that held my heart is fled—
The inmates of that cot are—dead!"
That last, that spirit-quenching word,
Smother'd in heart, could not be heard.

"There first my kindling eye met hers,
Whose softly potent glance confers

A dreamy spell on memory still—
Love soothing Reason to fulfil
The pure wild passion of his will.
Her pearly brow serenely shone
With glory from the sinking sun,
Who seem'd delighted to delay
The fading of his richest ray,
To mingle with her wavy hair,
In amorous ringlets o'er her eyes,
Glowing like gorgeous clouds so fair,
Mid the deep azure of warm skies.
She had a spiritual look,
As if her tranquil soul then took
A voyage to its heaven.
And was such beauty to her given
To breathe its charms away on earth?
Such unexceptionable worth,

As from above it had its birth,
In that more worthy world will live;
And she, in heaven's eternal bliss,
Again to me, to me, will give
More love than lives in this.

Young hearts, all passionate and true,
Enraptured with the transient hue
Of Love's warm wing so brightly new,
Will always palpitating feel
Tender Imaginations steal
Fluttering o'er the spirit's view—
So wildly strange, and strangely fair,
Ah who would deem such danger there!
Ah who would deem Love gender'd Care!

"From such deep visions, poets gain
The spirit of each magic strain,

Which on the memory will retain,
Like glorious dreams, an endless reign.
Fain would I fondly now repeat
The dazzling charm of Love's deceit—
But most have known—perchance you know
The multiplicity of woe,
And matchless joys, from thence that flow—
Enough!—we mingled souls and sighs,
And spake our spirit with our eyes.
Such sweet enchantment lasts not long—
Affection mourns, for Fate is strong:
Love's tears have tarnish'd all his glow,
And drench'd his seraph wing in woe;
No more he soars, but inly sighs
O'er his remember'd paradise,
For we to doubt alas were doom'd,
Till on my heart despair assum'd

A dark and desolating sway,
And forced me from my home away;
For nought was left to cheer me there—
But all was deep despair—despair!

"Thou sigh'st, but dost not shudder yet,—
Thou hatest murder!—"murder!"—No—
I meant not murder; I forget—
The multitude but deem'd it so.—
A curse, a curse of blood I feel!—
Though guiltiness is not that curse,
Its cowering gloom could scarce be worse:
In yon wild glen I drew the steel,
And plunged it in a heart that beat
With jealous passion's fiercest heat.—
Alone, he burst upon me there,—

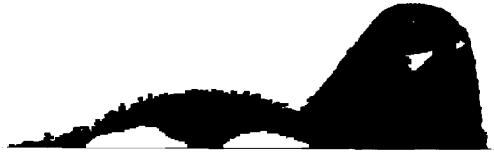
A moonbeam flash'd upon his sword,
It gored my side without a word:—
He conquers death, who death will dare,—
We fought, he fell, he raged in death;
He cursed me with his gasping breath:
That black deep curse is on me still,
And, groaning utterance in my ear,
Hangs heavy, panting words of fear,
My very inmost sense to chill.
'If but the damn'd have fiendish power
To torture others with the whole
Of their fierce pangs, this very hour
Let hell receive my ripen'd soul,—
I'll suffer all to torture thee,
Thou demon of despair to me.
May horror rest upon thy heart,
Blast thy affections, and impart

A darker boundlessness of woe,
Than even I shall ever know!
May hurling passions' stormy hell
Thy struggling spirit still compel
To dare worse deeds than fiends conceive,
That so thou may'st thy soul bereave
Of light, of rest, of hope,—and still
Be plunging deeper into ill!'

"To be suspected murderer!
To lie in darkness, doubt, and chains!—
To forfeit all I could prefer
To wav'ring life!—To pine with pains
Unwhisper'd, save to self-despair!
To list the wretch,—ah! who could dare?
For rival love had blood been spilt,
And all of me *seem'd* guilt—guilt—guilt!

"I stood the public shock of eyes,
And stated truth without disguise;
But nought could prove or false or true,
And doubt on doubt still stronger grew.
Acquitted—in the speechless gaze,
A horrid loneliness I stray'd,—
By Love still harrass'd, though betray'd—
The hissing whisperers to amaze,
With looks that never look'd afraid.

"Darkness envelops earth and sky,
The murmuring blast now hurries by,
The seer leaves rustle o'er the ground,
The gathering tempest broods around,
The hoarse sea growls a broken roar;
The lawless band is on the shore,—



They wait to waft me o'er the wave,
Which seems to promise many a grave;
But death for daring's sake they brave.
I haunt the stream at night's mid hour—
Here oft I felt soft Rapture's power;
But why, in darkness, do I hear
The struggling stream complaining near?
Why dream of that dear angel voice,
Which could my being's self rejoice?
Why linger here with fancies vain?—
It is to list that voice again.
But all I hear are faint wild strains
Of lonely harpings, dark and lorn;
No voice in unison complains,
To teach the sighing air to mourn;

The heart is in them, sorrows' soul
Wakes the strings to trembling life
The wounded spirit's sad controul,
And dying sounds from passion's strife.

"Adieu—adieu, a long adieu!—
Adieu to love, and hope, and home!
Adieu to all!—To Ellen too?
Adieu, dear Ellen, all but you,—
You still are *here*, where'er I roam.

"Restless as hell, wild Ocean heaves
His struggling surges round the shore;
Which the frail bark reluctant leaves,
To reel amid the sullen roar
And boiling wrath she boundeth o'er.

"Rage on, rage on, thou ruthless sea;
Are not thy billows hushless—dread—
In their dark turbulence, like me?
Are not the storm-clouds, o'er my head,
Bright, to the gloom within me spread?

"No more my early step shall wake
The sprightly lark to greet the light;
Nature no more, for me, shall take
Glad hues at eve, morn, noon, or night,
With fresh enchantment to the sight.

"Love, friendship, power, and pride, and fame,
Indignant fly from woe and me.
Can demon curses blast my name?
Rage on, rage on, thou troubled sea,—
May not the wretched rest in thee?

"The moonlit haunts of love and bliss,
And flutt'ring hearts, and raptured eyes;
Are these exchanged for this, for this,—
The hopeless weariness of sighs,—
For such delights as heaven supplies?
"Strike, strike bold bark!— behold a rock,
Black bursting from a sea of foam!—
Better to perish mid the shock,
And rot in some huge monster's home,
Than with Despair and Memory roam.
"In varied climes, o'er raging seas,
I wander'd with my mind's disease;
In scenes of splendor, where the sky
Was *truly* heaven to the eye.
Transcendent charms are vainly glowing,
While, o'er the heart's recesses flowing,
Floods of treasured sorrow burst:

And vainly Nature seems bestowing
Smiles that meet Creation's wooing,
When fond Imaginations curst,
And doubts, by disappointment nursed,
And dreams, like ghosts of days gone by,
Haggardly haunt the memory.

" E'en Beauty's choicest forms of grace,
In mould of limb, and thought of face,
With eyes of laughing gladness—blue,
And deep, and sunny, as the view
Of the warm skies o'er which they glanced—
Before my sicken'd vision danced.
But vain are choicest charms below,
While Memory chains the heart to Woe,
And vain—glad smiles, and gifts, and graces,
Sylph-like forms, and angel-faces,—

While thought conveys a cloud between
All that may be, and what hath been.
As on black night the lightning glows,
Impending horrors to disclose;
As peerless brightness may appear
To render darkness still more drear;
So Memory o'er my spirit flew,
Deepening the solitude I knew.

"O what are warmer lands to me,
All glowing splendid though they be,
With softly gilded azure sky,
And vernal freshness ever nigh,
Rich mellow verdure to supply,
And glad the earth!
Are such mild charms so pure—divine—
As the deep sturdiness of thine,—
Land of my birth?

In thee the soul strong virtues dwell,
Such as sublimed the patriot Tell,
Affections firm, in dauntless breast,—
A Sydney bled, and Hampden fell—
Though tender too as Pity's own ;
Except by tyranny oppress'd,
Its stubborn daring never shown.

" Isle of free men and daughters fair,
Domestic bliss and pious care,
And homely worth;
Sedate-eyed Liberty's own land,
Of giant grasp though fond command—
Land of my birth!
Dear native land ; approaching thee,
In vain I sought thy shores to see ;

For thickly on my heart-blood rush'd
Wild phantoms of what yet might be,
Till blinding tears restrainless gush'd,
And all the train of memory
Roused their deep energy in me.
Sweet birth-place of each ardent hope!—
I thought of green hills' gradual slope,—
Of flowery dell, and tuneful stream,
Sprinkled, in sunset's heavenly beam,
With many a sparkling golden gleam,—
Of hoary oaks' majestic shade,—
Of freshness breathing o'er the glade,—
Of sacred haunts of solitude,
In Devon's fair vales and moorland rude,—
Of jagged rocks, and beetling cliffs,—
Of cheerful sailing white-wing'd skiffs,—

Of patient Industry's content,—
Of autumn evenings' merriment,—
Of sabbath peace,—of village love,—
And oh! of her, now blest above!
I thought of early friendships broken,—
Of burning words in fondness spoken,—
Of every heart-recorded token
Of all that's past!—
Deep, deep, and dreadful was the thought
Of never finding what I sought—
A home at last!

"Oh! little deem'd I love could make
Dear Ellen sorrow for my sake,
And all her playful folly rue,
Till vain regret to madness grew:

E'en that sad thought had been relief,
To my intensely selfish grief.

* * * * * * * *

"She knew me not; though still I press'd
Her sighing bosom to my breast,
While o'er her pallid cheek a rush
Of thought-warm'd blood convey'd a blush,
And lit her sunken eye, so blue,
With wild confusion, as it flew.
Her scatter'd locks hung loosely down!
In silken, wavy, glossy brown;
And on them feeling's gems of soul
Escap'd my burning eye-lids roll,
And trembling glitter gladly there,
Like dew-drops on Diana's hair.
And then she wander'd forth with me,
The scenes of vanish'd bliss to see.—

'Twas when the fervid sun had set,
And Cynthia's crescent ray had met
Yon mountain's rugged breast of rock,
So bear to battle every shock
Of Time and Tempest as they fly;—
A billowy gloom had partly clouded,
And with mysterious darkness shrouded
Its jagged summit, wild and high,
Like an old castle mounting to the sky.

"How beautiful is night!—
When from some romantic height,
While quiet lulls the world asleep,
To view the moon ascend the steep,
And as her rays serene from clouds emerge,
A line of lustre, o'er the slumb'ring deep,
Reach, like a gold-paved path, to heaven's verge—

When stars appear in beauty bright,
And earth assumes a shadowy light,
And solemn stillness holds the air,
Save the slight murmur of a rill,
In distance dashing down a hill;—
Oh then how beautiful is night?—
'Tis then that Fancy takes her flight,
And, rapt in visions, drowns the soul in bliss.—
'Twas such a season, such a night,
With ocean, earth, and air as calm as this.
And then her cheek acquir'd a glow,
And then a sigh escap'd her breast,
And then a tear began to flow,
Which Virtue's self might fain have bless'd,
And claim'd it as the purest gem,
To deck her heavenly diadem.

An awful grandeur seem'd to dwell
Around the spot, but who can tell
How potent its deep charm might be,
On love-awaken'd memory?
Her madden'd mind its power confess'd,
Although with weighty woe oppress'd,
But of far different kind from that
Which lately on her features sat;
No bended brow, and fixed stare—
No portrait of a cureless care.
Her placid sorrow seem'd to find
Some recollection in her mind,
Of happiness her heart had known,
Beyond the reach of feeling flown.
Oh! who can say the reason why
She breath'd that single heavy sigh,

Or what should bid the glistening tear
Like a pure pearly drop appear?

"O'er this same path we saunt'ring walk'd,
While of her dream-like woes she talk'd,
In accents musically sweet;
Such as when sounds seraphic meet,
And some fair finger strikes the strings;
Till on the ear rich sorrow rings,
And winged words, with magic fraught,
Centre the soul thus spell-like caught,—
And hand, and heart, and lips are taught
To heal the wounded,—wound the hale,
Like some sweet spirit on the gale;
While in the maiden's eye, so clear,
Her soul's true rapture holds a tear,

Cerulean-colour'd, calm and bright,
With that full flood of living light,
So deeply, spiritually pure,
As if it were embodied thought,
From that celestial fountain brought,
Where woman's spirit beams secure.
In words conveying thus she spake:—
'Will memory ever mournful make
The fond poetic-fancied train,
And fill this heart with ceaseless pain,
Where oft, careering with delight,
Exulting hopes, and visions bright,
Have held extatic reign?

"'Yes—now I feel my mind so given,
That if I were in highest heaven,

Beyond the sight of that mild star,
Which purely burns so fair—so far,
I should not have one thought of joy,
That giant grief would not destroy.
E'en now my spirit's casual ray,
Free, unencumber'd, flits away
To that dark mountain's misty brow;
And seems to sit in silence now,
On that light cloud, so calmly cold,
Which, like a throne begirt with gold,
Stands in the midst of those like snow,
Serenely worshipping below.
I see, I see him in that bower—
There oft we pass'd a fleeting hour;
Like one swift ray of light we seem,
Like that which now, with trembling beam,
Breaks o'er the sky in mystic gleam.

And'

"She knew me—and, with magic might,
Truth burst upon her spirit's sight;
A flash of thought to view reveal'd
All that her madness had conceal'd.
No startling word, and scarce a look,
Betray'd the feeling that then shook
Her trembling frame;—a fainting sigh,
A sudden lightning in her eye,
A sob convulsive, and opprest,
Her inward agony express'd:
And then she fell upon my breast,
As though *it* could afford her rest.

"What madness seized my burning brain!
What rapture shiver'd through each vein!

But oh! 'twas scarcely joy that gave
My quicken'd pulse its lightsome play.
The lambent meteor on the grave
Springs from corruption's dank decay,
And that small glimmering of a ray
Of Hope's least smile but lit the way
To that cold sepulchre, where I,
With her cold clay, shall shortly lie—
The owl *is* omenous,—for then
His awful voice shook yonder glen!

"Reason had its reign resumed,
And Love's own light her eye illumed;
Yet, though her beauty bloom'd anew,
As if to bless the frequent view;
But, though sweet prospects, brightly fair,
Seem'd to promise we should share

All the deep bliss of wedded love,
Far other fate was doom'd above.—
Consumption deadly dread disease,
Oft the companion of the wise,
O'er her fine features threw disguise;
So mildly threw a glow to please
The soul that saw its ruthless sway,
And watch'd its victim pine away.—
Oh! how intensely passionate
Were the wild thoughts that love inspired!
And Hope, she smiled at frowning Fate,
And almost promised all desired!
Her vivid eye's serene expanse
Peculiar energy express'd,
And, with a strange resistless glance,
Begat emotion in my breast.—

A purely awful joy, that nought
Can comprehend but heart-deep thought.
Impassion'd eager fantasy,
With lightning-hurry, pour'd such flood
Of fervent thoughts on my young blood
That Rapture breathed on Agony.

"Oh! I beheld her beauteous frame
Possess'd by fever's hectic flame,—
And mark'd the thrilling blood's quick track,
In purple 'neath her snowy skin,
Which oft, as if the power to speak,
That felt Death's silent strife within,
Rush'd into scarlet on her cheek,
And on her panting heart then slowly flutter'd back.
Each coming day new hope supplied,
Till she and hope together—died!

"Oft hath my soul been rapt by visions bright,
Glowing and glorious as an angel's dream,—
Earthly, but richer than celestial light,
Which mantles with magnificence supreme,
The chaste-eyed harbinger of ancient night,
When warmly calm, like pure seraphic themes,
All-hued effulgence o'er creation beams.

"But oh, surpassing, spiritually sweet,
Is the devotion of a lovely saint,
Such as I saw—in whom, commingling meet,
Charms which e'en Raphael might despair to paint.
Meekly she knelt,—formality's deceit
Ruled not *her* humble attitude of prayer,—
'Twas Beauty worshipping her Maker there!

"She look'd like Faith personified to pray,
Having invisibility in view;
While tears extatic glitter'd in the ray,
Which round the room a sacred lustre threw,
From the deep glory of incipient day,—
Like smiles benignant of delighted heaven,
To whom impassion'd prayer and praise were given.

"In silent sanctity the charmed air
Hush up its breathing, fearing to offend,—
As if it wonder'd that a form so fair,
And seeming sinless, should so lowly bend,—
Not to a crucifix of sculptured Care—
The presence of Omnipotence she felt,
And to his manifested mercy knelt.

"And all was stillness, as profound as death,
Except that eager lips appear'd to part,
Though silv'ry voice awoke not, for her breath
Was but the wordless incense of her heart;
In faint vibrations, for a little space,
Her auburn hair betray'd it trembling through,
And then hung motionless before her face,—
For to her God both breath and spirit flew.
Oh! that my spirit thus may wing its flight,
And thus be blended with eternal light.

* * * * * * *

"Where dwells her sire?" the stranger said.
"My friend, her father too, is dead:
He dwells within the turf-thatch'd grave,
O'er which the sable yew-boughs wave;
And where the weary are at rest
For lonely age is surely best."

"And does her mother yet remain?"

"She lived—till every hope was vain;

Nor could her Ellen close her eye

And wake in pain but find her by:

Her aged hand all aid supplied,

And oft, in trembling woe, she tried

A gushing tear in vain to hide.—

Oh! may such mother fond be near,

Whene'er I die, to drop a tear;—

Oh! may such tenderness supply

The last frail aid whene'er I die!—

"Like some sweet flower, in beauty born,

By sudden blast untimely torn,—

Like leaves that form'd its sheltering bower,

Crush'd by the self-same tempest's power,—

At once the parents and their pride
Lie lowly mould'ring side by side;
Their dust to dust at once was given—
Their spirits mingling met in heaven!

"An outcast on the world behold!
A lonely wretch with heart all cold
Since none can look in love on me
And smile away my misery."

'You had a friend I thought,—a youth
Whose heart appear'd the home of truth!'
"A friend I had,—but now—have not.
That friend, that friend was not forgot:
He lingers on a foreign shore
Or perhaps on nature looks—no more!—

Oh, if his faithful heart were nigh,
The clouds that chill my soul would fly!"
The stranger's arms extended flew—
'Behold him here still thine, still true!'—
The mourner's memory, which had slept,
Woke with that voice,—his friend he knew,
'And fell upon his neck, and wept.'—

"'Though proudest hopes young life can bring,
Shadow'd by Time's, relentless wing,
Shed darkness on despair;
Though the deep joys of love betray,—
Though all of worldly pride decay,—
Though thoughts engender care,—
Though nature's smiles by tears be hid,—
Though fondness still thy heart forbid

To leave the silent sod;—
Know there is comfort yet for thee—
Submissive kiss the rod,
And with the eye of patience see,
That blessings wait for thee—for me—
In friendship and in—God."

Such words, with midnight stillness blended,
As o'er the dewy plain they wended.—
Those friends are brother minstrels still,
And oft they sit on that sweet hill,
And, harp in hand, give feeling voice,
Until the raptured air rejoice,—
And waft impassion'd breathings round,
Mingling soft sorrow with glad sound.

THE END.

Local

POEMS.

Published in the Plymouth Journal.

"O Nature! whose Elysian scenes disclose
His bright perfections at whose word they rose,
Next to that power who form'd thee and sustains,
Be thou the great inspirer of my strains."

OCEAN.

The Lord is upon many waters.

I LOVE thee, Ocean, in thy every form—
Calm in repose, or raging in the storm;
When on thy bosom smiles the god of day,
And trembling glory lives on thine array:
Or when in darkness hoarsest thunders sound,
As from the rocks thy boiling waves rebound.
Sublime art thou in all thy varied views,
When night descends, or when the sun pursues

Through heaven's blue arch his high ethereal way,
Delighting Nature with effulgent day;
Or when, in eve, enamelling the sky,
His beams combine in tints of every dye;
And, adding grandeur to the glory given,
Thy burnish'd billows seem another heaven;
And when the Empress of the silent night,
Crown'd with the lustre of her sacred light,
Enthroned on golden clouds, in sov'reign state,
As if with conscious beauty's pride elate,
Sheds on thy surges visionary beams,
Like the soft splendour of elysian dreams:
Then thy glad waves, in mingled motion shine,
And murmur praises to that Power Divine,
Which bade that moon enchant the midnight hour,
And o'er the earth her rays of radiance shower.

At such an hour,—when Summer's breath of bliss,
So sweetly wafted, warmly came to kiss
The calm cool surface of thy bosom deep,
And Nature seem'd so dreamingly asleep;
My sympathetic soul, inspir'd by thee,
Was first betray'd to love of minstrelsy.

O boundless image of a boundless God!
Thy far-spread seas, obedient to his nod,
Stretch'd out their arms to clasp the growing earth,
When first his mandate spake it into birth;
Thy new-made waves acknowledged his controul,
From utmost arctic to antarctic pole;
As their dark depths his freezing frown confess'd,
And their rude billows petrified to rest,
And form'd th' eternal axis of the world,
On which revolving still through space 'tis hurl'd:

Thy wrathful waters tremble at his will,
And feel the silent power that makes them still.
O'er earth prevailing, though it bounds thee now,
Thy marshall'd surges made the nations bow,
Ere o'er thine empire flew the restless dove,
And Death below, and Silence reign'd above:
Dread still subdues man's rebel heart whene'er
Danger and fury in thy paths appear;
Yet oft, weak mercenary man, for strife,
Or trade or pleasure, trusts thee with his life;
And oft, some demon, envious of thy charms,
Affrights thy billows with combined alarms;
Fate-wing'd with thunder, threat'ning horror flies,
And winds confound thy waters with the skies,—
Portentous meteors blaze with startling gleam,
And livid lightnings o'er thy surges stream,

As on they rush, with ruin in their rear,
Till Hope expires beneath the frowns of Fear;
And Devastation laughs in scorn, to scan
The wreck and wretchedness of man's and man.
When the beholder marks proud Britain's boast,
Sailing superbly off the length'ning coast,
With light'ning flash it strikes the mental sight,
That thus precarious passes man's delight.—
All-ruling Heaven commands the raging storms,
Hushes dread Ocean, or his face deforms—
If reason's magnet point its index true,
By Heaven's bright guidance we our track pursue;
Then, when distress appears with tempest dark,
O'er life's rough seas we steer the lab'ring bark;
And reach a haven of delight at last,
Render'd more happy by the dangers past.

I love thee, Ocean, in thy every form,
Calm in repose, or raging in the storm;
In thee I view the myst'ries of his might,
Whose name is Wonderful, whose throne is light,—
Whose power is limitless, whose will command,
Whose nature—what?—we ne'er can understand:
Too high for thought, for angels too supreme,
For aught but worship, endless praise their theme.
Man knows enough to join their grateful songs,
To him, to whom whatever is belongs:
Man knows enough to feel that God is good,
And more than that need not be understood.
Then, O my soul! while gazing on the sea,
Caught on Devotion's wing, to him we'll flee;
While roaming round the rude romantic shore,
I hear the murmur or the sullen roar,

And see, perchance, the melancholy rays
Which the mild moon religiously displays:
When the dark clouds a silver edge assume,
And partial lustre aggravates the gloom,
I worship him whom Nature owns her sire,
And strike the strings of rapture's heavenly lyre,
In purest praises to the God who lives
In every object which his bounty gives;
At whose command poetic beauty glows,
And the firm rocks in rugged charms arose;
Whom Ocean learn'd instinctive to obey,
When first he said, these rocks thy pride shall stay!

THE MINSTREL.

My dream was both of sound and sight,
Of glowing words and visions bright.
It seem'd I saw a minstrel straying,
In earth's most heavenly haunt, to muse;
While the rich dawn was yet arraying
The clouds with colours painters choose:
Starlight and sunshine mingling threw
O'er his high brow a mellow hue,
And on his jetty eye and hair,
Like Mercy beaming on Despair.

A soul-form'd tear essay'd to flow
Down his fine features, pale with woe;
And heart-sighs panted from his breast,
As if by agony opprest.
But soon the prospect, on his soul,
Shed a more genial controul;
For Nature's smile affords relief
To every bard's intensest grief.
Upon a fragrant bank he stood,
Near a green, bow'ry, wavy wood;
Where muse-lov'd murmur sweet was heard,
With matins mix'd of every bird;
And whence, in prospect pride, were seen
The wide expanse of Ocean's sheen;
And hills that hove their heads on high,
Blending their blue mists with the sky.

He rolls his rapid eye around,
And feeling maddens at the sound
Of music's voice his harp supplies,
As o'er its chords his finger flies,
And wafted words like these arise :—

Awake! awake my harp and heart;
Awake my soul, awake and sing;
The clouds that chill'd thy strength depart—
My spirit pants for rapture's wing
To fan its flame, this holy hour,
To seraph's warmth and seraph power.

For man—for man, too long, in vain,
O harp, hath trembling seized thy strings;
His deeds no more deserve a strain—
To Nature's self, thy music flings

Its soul of sound upon the air,
And echoes Nature! Nature! there.

The snowy bloom of balmy thorn—
The diamond dew on em'rald blade—
The flush and freshness of the morn—
The gladness breathing o'er the glade,—
And all that day in glory brings,
And all from heaven and earth that springs.

The dewy tints of sparkling flowers
Blushing at the Sun-god's smile,
In all the hues of radiant showers,
'Mid which his Iris glows awhile;
And gorgeous pomp of eventide,
O'er prospects wild in barren pride.

The grandly varied shapes and dyes,
The light-apparel'd clouds assume,
While all-hued Evening struggling flies,
Before dark Night's approaching gloom,
When shivery gleams of sunset's glow
Recline on glassy waves below.

The ceaseless gush of mountain streams,
O'er rocks and roots, 'mid leaves and boughs,
All softly silver'd with moonbeams,
Whenever the changeful queen allows
Her floods of placid smiles to flow,
And charm her subject sea below.

O thou vast murderer, ruffian deep!
Can rest so sooth thy treacherous brow?

Conscienceless Innocence asleep,
Has not a calmer charm than thou,
When Autumn's breath, so warmly bland,
Enchants thy breast, and glads the land.

I love thee, e'en in roughest mood—
For thou like me art all alone,
A friendless waste of solitude,
With fretful rage and mystic moan;
But still bright skies can brighten thee,
And scenes like this enrapture me.

Oh the deep majesty of view!
When sullen storms give anger vent,
With thoughtlike hurry flashing through
The thunder-startled firmament;

When madden'd waves, wild winds before,
Rush foaming on the rugged shore.

These, these, are Nature's charms sublime,
Delighting him, whose vagrant thought
Can gild the heedless wing of Time,
With glorious gleams that come unsought,—
Vividly dazzling with emotion,
Like lightning on thy waves,—O Ocean.

How wond'rous is this world, how fair!
The mental images of sense
Burst on the soul, as if they were
Bright shadows of Omnipotence;
Whose will bade Nature's self appear?
The God—the God! is near! is near!

THE BREAKWATER.

How awfully sublime the roar
Of waves that dash around the shore,
Fast weltering from afar!
While ridge-like, as of drifting snow,
The wind-whirl'd foam is seen below,
'Mid wild commingled war.

A poet here absorb'd might stand,
Soul-seized by Rapture's strong command,
And rich in rushing thought;

While stormy sea, and howling blast,
And thundering surge, and sky o'ercast,
Appear with horror fraught.

See how the waters bounding fly,
Extending, to the raptured eye,
A line of light along!
Behold, afar, where breakers rise,
Like hoary mountains to the skies,
The subject of my song!

Through parting clouds a splendour streams,
Which in a burst of glory beams
Athwart the misty spray,—
Giving a grandeur to the sight,
As richly varied, and as bright,
As Fancy can display.

'Mid the dread thunders of the deep,
Stretch'd, like Leviathan asleep,
The mighty structure stands;
The wonder of the waves that roll,
With rapid and confused controul,
To lash the rocky strands.

The mandate of Almighty Mind,
By firm-based boundaries, confined
The swelling surges pride,
Whose force is form'd to overthrow
What from usurping man may grow,
But there it *seems* defy'd.

For now they boil with ruthless rage,
And unavailing warfare wage,
Against the rock-made isle;

And flashing beat with furious force,
While rudely rushing on their course,
Intent to crush the pile.

But it extends its giant length,
As if quite conscious of its strength,
O'er Ocean's secret beds;
And breaks the billows' width of weight,
While, mounting to enormous height,
They heave their monstrous heads.

Rage on, rage on, thou madden'd sea,
I love thy wild sublimity,
And myst'ry so profound—
When soul-storms lower, thou hast a charm
To snatch me from their dire alarm,
By sense of sight or sound.

But if the tempest o'er thee fly,
Or if thy face reflect the sky,
On this dear spot I stand;
For here, when wind-gods strive with thee,
Or when thy proud repose we see,
Thou still art greatly grand.

THE HOE.—Plymouth.

Is there a bard who loves to see
The varied charms of Nature's face—
The rude, the mild,
The calm, the wild,
In mingled beauty richly free?
This lovely, sweet, enchanting place
Presents each scene to meet his mind,
Each grand diversity combined,
Of Earth's green mantle—greener sea,
And all that he could wish to find
To raise his soul's poetic power,
In Rapture's full impassion'd hour.

The verdant view, the watery way,
The hills afar, the fortress near,
The rocky shore,
The thund'ring roar,
Of cannons', or of surges' play;
And Britain's bulwarks, which appear
To woo the winds, and smile at fear,
As o'er the waves they grandly glide,
Seeming in scorn to stem the tide,
And dash away the silv'ry spray,
Proud of their banners and array.

Fix'd like the monuments of age,
See the Leviathan of art,
Firm as a rock,
Resist the shock,
And break the water's rudest rage.

It seems from out the deep to start,
With more than Neptune's own command;
To bound the billows in their pride,
And bid the bold, insulting band,
Depart in peace on either side;
And then, like vassals, gently go,
Paying obeisance as they flow.

Supremely charming, when the sun
Toward the western hills descends;
Or when, in morn,
His beams adorn
The clouds and seas he shines upon:
As now his lovely light he lends,
To gild the earth, the waves, the sky;
And crimson rays of radiance fly,

And flash fantastically by,
Mingling with tints of every dye,—
The soul, enraptured, seems to dream,
O'ercome by visions so supreme.

The rude romantic heights afar
Receive the sun's last farewell smile,
And seem to feel
The rays that steal
Along their brows from his bright car.
That fortified and friendly isle,
By Nature's hand, is planted there,
To guard this region of her care,—
And Ocean clasps her in his arms,
As if enamour'd of her charms;
And round her rocks the billows play,
To kiss her shores, and die away.

Behold yon western woody mount,
Whose fringe of firs appears on fire,
And skies, and sea,
Which seem to be
A liquid lustre from the same rich fount!—
What other heaven can man desire,
While gazing at a scene like this?
We seem a part of what we see—
We feel partaking in the bliss
Of spirit and sublimity;
And find that thus our dreams are made
Of heavenly joys which never fade.

Here first I felt the worth of love,—
When the mild moon began to soar,
And spread her light,
In beauty bright,

On all below, and all above;
And throw a line of lustre o'er,
From Ocean's verge, to ocean's shore:
The breeze blew then as now it blows,—
With healthful pleasure on its wings;
And, like a babe roused from repose,
In softest breathings of the Spring,
The sea was gently murmuring.

In calm or storm, at day or night,
When lovely hope gilds every thought—
To roam around
This magic ground,
By sun's, or moon's appropriate light,
Affords me more than can be bought
For all Peruvia's mines of gold—
Affords me more than can be told,

Of that dear dream of real delight,
Which monarchs oft in vain have sought;
And which I would not change with them,
For bauble wealth or diadem.

While sense of Love, or Beauty's power,
Shall hold a seat within my soul;
While Nature's boon,
Or Sun, or Moon,
Or Iris glowing in the shower;
While waves in threatening thunders roll,
And breezes blow, and tempests lour,
And still retain their strong controul,
Bestowing that poetic joy,
Which wealth gives not, nor can destroy;—
If memory live, in weal or woe,
Still treasure all thy scenes—O Hoe!

WRITTEN ON TOWNSEND HILL,

NEAR PLYMOUTH.

'Tis here, 'tis here I love to stand,
When Spring with verdure clothes the land;
And Heaven above, and Earth below,
Receive the morning's richest glow;
When first the warbling lark's delight
Persuades his fluttering wings to flight,
As if aspiring to express
His worship and his happiness;

For now my soul expanding feels
The splendour which the scene reveals,
And breathes the rapture of the hour,
With Nature's own poetic power.
'Tis here, 'tis here I love to think,
And from the spirit's fountain drink
Large draughts of feeling, which inspire
The mind with true seraphic fire.
'Tis here 'tis here, I love to look
On the bright page of wisdom's book,
And watch the glorious god of day
Spread o'er creation that array,
Prepared in looms deluding sight,
And dyed in pure prismatic light.
No rocks in rugged grandeur rise,
Mounting majestic to the skies;

No cataracts, in awful pride,
Foam thundering down the mountain's side;
No glens of glooms, no groves appear,
Shedding romantic beauty near;
No rudeness o'er the prospect reigns;
No ruins slumber on the plains;
But all is silent and serene,
Within this ever-pleasing scene:
And through yon dale the loitering stream
So softly glides with many a gleam;
It seems reluctant, as it flows,
To break "the rapture of repose."

Amid embowering hills of green,
A liquid plain is partly seen,—
So calm, so beautifully bright,
Like a pure lake of living light;

And as the distant dazzling sea
Glows in that sweet sublimity,
Which by reflected glory's given,
It seems a brighter part of heaven :—
The clouds magnificently rest
Upon its coolly placid breast,—
Mountains on mountains climb the sky,
Richly enamell'd with each dye,
And form a back-ground boldly grand,
For verdant hills on either hand;
And in their mingled tints of shade,
So aiding each, so softly made,
They seem from such a scene as this,
The path-way to the realms of bliss!

The buildings ranged on either hill,
Beside the mirror, near the mill,

Upon the water's glassy face,
Reflected gain a grander grace;
And heaven, and earth, and water, seem
Confused together in a dream.

The fir-fringed mount, and neighbouring isle,
By which the burnish'd billows smile;
And laughing lawns, and heights of brown,
And yonder congregated town;
The soft gradations of the ground,
Blending the magic landscape round;—
All, all, the vagrant eye surveys,
Within the soul conspire to raise
A bliss for language too refined,
A voidless ecstacy of mind.

The boundless bounty of the might,
That bade such beauties bless the sight,

And suits the soul of man to seize
Sublime enjoyments such as these;
By all religion's light can find,
Demands acknowledgement of mind.
Can man feel less, can man feel more,
Than deep devotion, and adore?

A DEATH-BED DREAM.

A FRAGMENT.

——" O mother do not weep!"—
And fairy dreams then seized my slumb'ring sense,
Immortal images of things too deep
For casual minds,—conceptions, too intense
For vigilance to feel while roused by strife
Of sight, and sound, and taste, and touch, that wake
The jarring agonies which teach us life;
With doubts, and daring fears, and thoughts that make
Us denizens of flesh and frailty shake.

Methought 'twas day, with light, but not like this
Glaring and gleaming; and I felt all sight,
Without aught seeming as its source, for bliss
A sunny mellowness of smiles infused,
With influence sweeter, milder, and more bright,
Than love e'er look'd, or woman ever used,
When, beaming soul and purity, her eye
Fix'd a fresh spell upon her lover's sigh.
A vernal feeling breathed along the vale
Where stray'd my soul, 'mid heavenly forms and hues.
Beautiful beings, gem'd with solid dews,
Radiant as rainbows, and as fair as love,
Sail'd on the balmy pinions of the gale,
That fann'd refreshing incense from a grove,
Where sighing perfume halo'd many a flower;
And music whisper'd from each trembling bough,

Whose kissing leafy verdure seem'd a bower
Living with melody and holy power.
And oh!—I feel their silent witch'ry now—
How many a pure-one bathed her curl-crown'd brow,
In fountains fabling Fancy cannot reach;
Richer than starlight on the blue sea's breast,
Or vivid glories blazing from the west,
While tuneful ripple sparkles on the beach.
Then came dim dreaminess of death, and fright,
And voices heard in darkness; while between,
The recollected features of the dead
Athwart my vision, with an instant flight,
Flash'd, till my spirit was o'erwhelm'd with dread
Of those that ere its very bliss had been.
A gradual splendour then its magic shed,
And modestly illumined scenes, that seem'd
As fresh and fadeless as the light that beam'd

Upon their beauty—Lo! a vision bright,—
Brighter by far than aught I yet had dream'd—
Soft as the soothing majesty of night,
When o'er green hills the peerless moon is seen,
'Mid starry grandeur richly rob'd, the queen
Of heaven and earth, and mistress of the main—
So tranquil on my fascinated sight
An angel being rose: a gloomy train
Follow'd her flight; but with a smile she threw
A galaxy of glory where she flew.
My heart-pulse gladden'd into rapture while
Her eye was on me; as she nearer drew,
Accents of promise panted through the air,
Which e'en the soul of Horror might beguile,
Make Want an Eden, and transform Despair.
A silver lily graced her whiter hand,
And trembled as she breathed upon its bloom;

And all-hued flowers, from some elysian land,
Fell as she pass'd, and—wither'd on a tomb.
She smiled on me, and then upon the sky;
While a meek bird, with eyes like her, a dove,
Took from her hand the flower, and soar'd on high:
"My name is Hope," she said; "I come from heaven,
To point thee thither, O my wayward boy!
Mercy's my mission, and my message love;
By me all visionary charms are given,
As emblematic of eternal joy:
Mercy, who sent me, waits for thee above.
Leave the dull earth, without a thankless sigh,
Death is thy life, but I with thee will die."
Smiling, he breathed his spirit with these words,
And selfish Grief would fain have wept for him.

A SKETCH.

THE lazy clouds were laughing at the Sun,
Slow-sinking amid glory of all hues,
Such as the ripening Autumn, in his pride,
When most ambitious to make earth a heaven,
From the warm lustre of his wing reflects.
The young year's ample promise was fulfill'd—
The reaper's joy was partner of his toil,
And Nature, glowing in abundance, felt
The animating bliss that, smiling, springs
Pure from the Fountain of Benevolence;
While, flowing o'er with freshness which inspires,

Creation's rapture gave each sense a zest.
A rich embower'd hill, so blandly cool,
The palace of the prospect shed its shade;
And a tall poplar nodding in the breeze,
Its smooth leaves glitt'ring in a crimson light,
To the calm covert now invited me.
Lorn in such loveliness, a man I saw,
Whom Time had blighted with his hurried breath,
And o'er whose soul, with world-destroying wing,
Diffused a shadow, deep'ning as he flew.
He sat half-leaning on a wither'd bough,
And look'd like Winter frozen at the heart,
Amid luxuriant Autumn's mingled charms.
His hoary head's exuberant array,
In reverend antiquity appear'd;
Such as a painter with a poet's soul

Might place on Mentor's majesty of brow.
A trembling tear stood shining in his eye,
As if its source were thawing at the sight—
So on an icicle a bright drop hangs,
Seeming uncertain or to freeze or fall;
But fall it did, and that too where it should—
On the warm bosom of a faithful friend.

Yes; that poor dog more sympathy express'd
Than man can show with all his boasted art.
The tremor of full feeling and of age
Was in the hand then raised to its caress:—
Ah! I have seen it on the flaxen curls
Of his son's son, whose round and ruddy cheek,
And speaking eye, secured the love of all,
But most of thee, old man; though now, alas!

His voice of childish cheerfulness no more
Begets soft rapture in his mother's breast—
Giving a grandeur to the yew-tree's shade;
The sun now weaves a splendour o'er their grave
So silent, so neglected, save by thee—
Her husband's heart laments not there its loss,
For now it rests a tenant of the same.
Gay in the sunniness of life he lived,
As a strong tree, by some sweet vine embraced;
But from his rooted rest by tempests torn,
Quickly he fell—and sever'd by the shock,
His once fair partner, with'ring, waited death,
And left thee thus to solitary woe.
I think I see thee—as I oft have seen—
Thine eye fast flashing with thy spirit's fire,
And seated on thy knee that fav'rite boy,

Lisping in innocence of little pranks:—
How thou didst smile at his delight,
And part his locks, loose flowing o'er his brow,
Like sunny clouds upon a snow-clad hill!
Where are the health and happiness of look—
The calm contentedness of hopeful thought?
Thy heart is now their dreary sepulchre.
Where is the mother of thy buried son?
Laid in the lowly grave, expecting thee!

TO I—

"From the wreck of the past which hath perish'd,
Thus much I at least may recall,
It hath taught me that what I most cherish'd,
Deserved to be dearest of all;
In the desert a fountain is springing,
In the wide waste there still is a tree;
And a bird, in the solitude singing,
That speaks to my spirit of thee."

WHEN wandering in poetic thought,
My mind will oft revert to thee:
And with sweet dreams of feeling fraught
Imagine thou dost think of me;
And then, forgetful of all care,

The earth no desert seems to be—
Each scene assumes an aspect fair,
Though, like the restless dove, I flee
From all that once my soul had bless'd
And seek repose within thy breast.

And oft I feel a genial glow,
Rise like a fountain of delight,
Diffusing freshness in its flow,
Which seems my bosom to requite,
For all the pangs which it must know,
From foes, disdain, or friendship's slight;
And life, that without thee, is woe,
Presents sweet prospects to my sight,
Whene'er my soul can fly to thine,
And feel thy spirit blend with mine.

And Fancy makes, with Memory's aid,
A fairy-land of ecstacies;
And Hope, with airy robe array'd,
A glorious galaxy supplies,
Through which my soul, by her convey'd,
With soft enchantment sweetly flies;
While oft in Iris light display'd,
Rich visions of the future rise,
Like undefined immortal gleams
Of dazzling bliss in heavenly dreams.

But every charm which thus I feel,
While Hope serenely o'er me throws
Her brilliant mantle to conceal
The sable source of human woes,
From that delightful memory springs

The holy rapture of my soul;
When first Love's bright imaginings
Assumed their magical controul;
And from thine eyes of azure hue,
His sense-subduing spirit flew.

THE DEPARTED.

My being still is link'd to thine,
By holy thoughts that haunt my heart,
Like gleams of glory which recline
On evening clouds, and there impart
A sober charm of calm delight,
Gilding the gloom with beamings bright.

But darkness gathers on my soul,
And blots my spirit's brightness o'er;
And dreamy sounds, with dread controul,
Whisper of joys that wake no more,—

And smiles of heart-fraught fondness dear
On fancy flash—and all is drear.

But why does mem'ry darkly weep?
And why is earth a desert now?
My love, thou sleep'st a dreamless sleep,
And stillness rests on thy cold brow—
That lip of smiles, that soul-lit eye,
With silent death in darkness lie.

The spell that spake in thy sweet voice
No more shall sooth my soul with dreams
Of potent richness, and rejoice
My panting heart with glowing themes—
What delicate delights supplied
My heaven of hopes, that with thee died!

And does thy spirit watch me here?
Oh, yes, thy presence deep I feel;
Thou look'st into my heart, and there
Behold'st what I could ne'er conceal—
Thy image throned in love and light—
A sacred shrine in memory's sight.

O! be my guardian angel still,
For thou didst love me while on earth—
At best this world is drench'd with ill—
Then what, without thee, is it worth?
Soon may my spirit wing away,
And blend with thine in ceaseless day.

PLYMOUTH SOUND.

A MOONLIGHT REVERIE.

ARE seraph wings more richly bright,
Though living with a liquid light;
More pearly and more chastely white,
Than that clear cloud on yonder height ?—
While palely smiling, heaven's fair queen
Sheds modest glory round her throne,
Making e'en this rude world serene,
And Solitude itself less lone :—
I love to wander by this shore—
To muse on mystery, and adore—

To ruminate on days gone by—
To dream of bliss, and yet to sigh.
A ruleless liberty of thought,
Ecstatic still, and undefined,
With more than Hope's own visions fraught,
Bursts strangely o'er my restless mind—
When, on the water's glowing breast,
A golden shower of light descends,
And yon sweet mount's high fir-form'd crest
With moonlight clouds so brightly blends:—
When stars seem floating on the waves,
And, on the billow-beaten beach,
The playful ripple gently laves
Each polish'd pebble it can reach:—
When scarce a single sound awakes
The cavern'd Echo to reply,
And earth of heaven's repose partakes,
And Ocean seems another sky;

And, gleaming on the distant verge,
A silver'd sail appears to glide,
Like feathery foam upon the surge,
When sparkling radiance gilds the tide.
The stirless shadows on the shore,
The ice-like calmness of the sea,
The frequent plash of light-tipp'd oar,
The almost silent melody;
The beacon beaming from afar,
The mild effulgence of Love's star,
The rock-built fabric's slumbering length,
The frowning fortress' guardian strength,
The whiten'd tower, the fort-crown'd isle,
So cheerful in the calm cool light;
And that sweet tranquillising smile,
Which all assumes on such a night.—
So fit to form poetic theme,

Are these commingling charms to me,
And in their majesty they seem
The very home of Poesy.

When murmurs musically deep,
While hushing Nature's self to sleep,
At such a softly awful hour,
Speak to the soul with mellow power;
And prompt imaginings supply
O'erwhelming wonder with a voice
That whispers of Eternity,
And seems to say—rejoice, rejoice!—
It is prophetic of a heaven,
Which blissful quietude shall fill,
Where spirits, that with storms have striven,
No more shall dread the warring will.

THE SUICIDE.

" Howling amidst the midnight storm
————On the ridgy steep
Of some loose hanging rock."————

" Quoeque a te morte revelli
Heu sola poterat, poterit nec morte revelli."

ANGEL of brightness! I behold thee now!—
A cloud has pass'd between thine eye and mine;
I see its lingering shadow slow dissolve,
While on thy beauty still it partly hangs,
Cheating my gaze. Come to my bosom—come!—
With eager rapture I would rush to heaven.
And art thou gone? Desert me not again!
Be still, my anxious heart! my brain, be still!—

Why whirl me in a vortex of chaotic thoughts,
With endless multitudinous desires,
That like a living ceaseless-raging sea,
With stormy clamour would devour my soul,
Drown its quick senses, and obscure sweet Hope,
In the dark horrors of its sleepless depth?
I feel—I feel—indeed my love, I feel
Thy soothing presence on my spirit now.
Oh! such it has been in thy lovely land,
Where all smiled sweetly like our love, so pure.
That calm bright moon beheld our early bliss,
Wrapt in each other; and approving heaven
Pour'd down a flood of happiness on earth
Till all we saw, felt, heard, conceived,
Seem'd sympathetic with our hearts' delight.
This world is surely beautiful in vain,

If we no more enjoy its loveliness
Of rapture, visible and eloquent,
That lives in Nature's silent features, where
We view the bliss we feel.—The mind makes all
Of joy or woe, of brightness or of gloom,
And binds our beings to the love of life,
And blends our sympathy with all that is—
Inanimate, or hanging on a breath.
E'en all the sunny majesty above,
And fair creation's paragon of charms,
In rich luxuriant Italy—by day
Or night; at dewy dawn, when Nature wakes
And finds herself bedeck'd with heaven's own
pearls;
Or Eve in variegated glory clad,
Ush'ring tranquillity and sober shades,

To give the world repose—are merely void
Without the mind's creative presence felt,
Seen, acknowledged there. The senses seize
Whate'er of zest in perfume or in taste,
In thrilling touch or magic melody,
In spirit-stirring sights or selfish hope,
From the quick soul with which our vivid minds
The varied objects of their grasp endow.
But surely all is beautiful in vain,
If we no more its loveliness enjoy.
Our happy beings, to each other all
Of wish and satisfaction, that resides
On earth, so sweet in sympathy of love,
Can clothe the universe with sentient charms,
And unimaginable ecstacies.
Come!—shall we wander for fresh happiness?

Lend me the witch'ry of thy voice, my love;—
I hear thee not—and yet, I think I do,—
List I in vain?—Why art thou silent, love?
The music of thy harp hath slept of late!
Sadness belongs not to a form so fair—.
Thou shalt not hide thine eyes and weep, for I
Could shed no tears of sorrow. Be not sad,
Though, I in deep-felt silence, have been so.
Is not the cherub image of thyself
Smiling delighted in thy happy arms?
Press him with fonder fervour to thy breast,
And smile again, like heaven on the sea,
Though it be restless in its dreamy sleep;—
And when he rouses into memory,
With reinvigorated zest for life;
And when his soul drinks rapture through his eyes,

Give him to me,—I shall participate
The laughing eagerness of his bright glance,
Uninterrupted in its searching power
And ceaseless curiosity.—Why not?
Thou knowest not what secret pangs of heart;
What soul o'erwhelming agonies intense,
Have hurried on, in dreadful loneliness,
Thy passion'd husband through a hell of thought;
Like a fierce comet in its endless haste,
Flying—but still, within it and around,
Attendant fires still quickening by its flight.
Why hide the energy of thy bright soul,
And veil the speaking sympathy alive
In all thy lovely lineaments of face?
Why cease to hold soft communings of heart?
Surely thy husband's love is still the same—

And art thou changed?—Speak! wherefore art thou
sad?
Reason is with me now.—Though love for thee,
With wild intensity of anxious dreams,
Had robb'd my soul of regulated light,
The intellectual sun again appears,
Opening the day, and dissipates all clouds,
Save that on thee.—Come then, rejoice, rejoice!
Dost thou not feel all gladness which I know?
Joy and thy presence are the same to me,
If only thou canst smile,—Come then, rejoice!
Touch, gently touch, with exquisite command,
Thy harp-strings, waking harmony divine,
Like that rich rapture, which then thrill'd my heart,
When first I felt the air alive with sound
That own'd communication intimate

With all the nervous elements sublime
Of thy own sensitive seraphic soul,
Replete with eager influence of thought,
Glancing impassion'd on from theme to theme,
Like lightning on the clouds, dazzling dull night.
The air itself, as waiting for thy words,
Hushes its breathing, listens now to learn
The sounds of soul and melody that fall
With trembling ecstacy upon the heart,
Like dewy perfume on the dying calm
Of summer eve, dissolving with delight.
Let rapture burst upon the midnight hour,
And charm the moon! Awake thy harp my love,
And I will tell thee what a dream has driven
My startled spirit through tempestuous pain,
Some undiscoverable hope to seek.

Why was it silent in my moody woe?
Its lightest note would wake my soul to joy,
And love, and mingling life, and thee, and thee!
Wilt thou first hear the horrors of my dream?
Methought thy guardian presence was my pride,
Upon thy bosom lay our fair-hair'd boy,
And I was gazing fondly on thy form;
When, suddenly, a darkness seized my sight,
And strange forgetfulness o'ershadow'd me.
A voice of terror shriek'd,—and it was thine.
A murderer held thee, but I could not see;
And then the nightingale began his lay,
And woke my soul to Fancy's witchery.
A grove of balmy myrtle bloom'd around—
I saw thee seated in a rosy bower,
'Midst sweet enchanted and enchanting hues.

The very blossoms seem'd to list thy strains
Of undulating melody, that flow'd,
Like living magic, from thy coral lips,
Entrancing Nature. With unconscious power,
The mellow richness of thy varied soul
Begat the rapture that it inly felt;
And thy susceptible and tender lyre
Acknowledged sympathy with thy rapt touch,
And spake the influence which that touch convey'd,
Till earth was still, with wonder and delight.
The lovely flowers all hung their listening heads,
To catch the sound and mix it with perfume;
The ravish'd air, still panting with thy kiss,
Sigh'd in its trembling eagerness of joy;
The birds were silent, and the sky was bright;
The clouds, in Fancy's view, appear'd to bear,

Upon their splendid variegated wings,
Angels, array'd with liquid light serene,
Attracted by thy harmony, until
They half forgot their errands to mankind.
A diamond tear then trembled on thy cheek,
And in an instant all was dark again.
Soon, 'mid the madden'd surges in the night
Without a star, tost by the tempest on,
Like whirling foam upon the breaking waves,
I seem'd to fly. Then, in my clasping arms,
A flash of lightning shew me that I held
A stiffen'd corse—a lifeless form of joy—
An ice-cold marble image of Love's pride!
Horror on horror! suicide was mine!
And I was doom'd with an eternal speed
To search a universe of worlds for thee,—
In vain—in vain.———

O God, it is no dream!

And I am desolate, and she is dead.

Her voice now whispers my impatient soul—

'Tis but this body that obstructs my flight,

Or I could follow through the azure heavens

And blend in being as we blend in love.

I come—I come!—though happiness may wait,

Yet will I catch her rather as she flies.

Horror bring joy—I come—I come—I come!

A RETROSPECT.

J. L. —

SWEET to the youthful lover's eye,
Is all that nature can supply,—
When in his breast begins the glow
Of dear delights which hopes bestow:
'Tis then his mind
Becomes refined,
And glories in poetic pleasure—
That source of soul, that secret treasure,

The full extent of which he feels,
  Whose soul's inspired to seize each gleam
Of vivid thought, which gaily steals,
  Rapid as fancies in a dream,
Across his mind's creative sight,
In images as boldly bright
As those which Fancy can descry,
Where polar lights fantastic fly,
And dazzling flash athwart the sky,
Mysterious mazes mingling in their flight.

From Love I gain'd the magic power
Of gilding many a passing hour—
In thoughts retired from all around,
With colours caught from rainbow hues,
Of such rich lights and glowing views

As in felt poetry are found,
And in Elysium abound.

That power it was which sway'd my soul,
When to the lovely vale I stole,
Where dwelt the centre on which turn'd
The blissful dreams of which I learn'd
To form my mind's revolving will,
And Fancy's heaven with hopes to fill.
The hour was Eve's, and silence stalk'd,
With placid pleasure, where I walk'd;
But hope, that in my bosom dwelt,
Begat the rapture which I felt—
For soon I thought that eye to meet,
So brightly calm, so softly sweet.
Oh! there was poetry around,
In every sight, in every sound;

And Silence listen'd as she heard
The warbled worship of each bird,
Which from the distance faintly fell,
In mellow music's sweetest swell.
At that calm hour such scenes I love—
When all around, beneath, above,
Assume new shapes; and Nature glows
And a rich flood of glory flows,
Till clouds, and hills, and plains, and sea,
Blend in supreme sublimity:
When all that vision can command,
Becomes magnificently grand;
And light, prismatically given,
Reflects on earth the hues of heaven;
When Evening, clad in radiant robe,
Stops in her journey round the globe;

Or seems to stop, and seems to smile,
As if man's worship to beguile.
That place appears for lovers made,
When in the west the glories fade;
And encloth'd clouds with various light,
So brightly beautiful, take flight;
And, in their stead, the stars appear,
Amid ethereal depths so clear,
Like spangled spots on night's array,
Ere Cynthia dares her charms display,
Less'ning the lustre of the ray,
Which Venus, Love's directing star,—
'Mid purple gloom a diamond bright,
Soft beaming on the brow of Night—
Sheds in mild influence from afar.
'Twas there I fondly whisper'd thee,
And there thy smiles enchanted me:

There I the tender tale did tell,
And there I look'd, and sigh'd farewell—
When the dear hope thine eye exprest
Inspired the same within my breast.
O, lovely idol of my heart,
Thy words, thy looks, will ne'er depart!

On earth there is a heavenly feeling—
A mix'd commotion, which destroys
All sense of things but those revealing
The brightest hopes and liveliest joys:
'Tis when two souls in love combine,
With ties of being too divine
For sensual grovellers to enjoy—
Of which they only have a thought,
Who are with kindliest feelings fraught,
And in imaginings employ
That flame of soul from rapture caught.

A bliss like that with thee I knew—
A bliss which oft my thoughts renew:
For Fancy fully brings to view
The gloomy glens, the murmuring rills
The woods extending o'er the hills;
And all the varied shades of green,
Mantling the emerald vale between
And oft, in dreams, I seem to see
The mingled magic of that scene;
For all of it, and all of thee,
Must live the pride of Memory.

WRITTEN AFTER HEARING A DIVINE,

WHO HAD BEEN MY SCHOOLMASTER.

TAMELESS and vivid as the vagrant eye
Of the sad eagle shut from earth and sky,
Which wanders still, as if it still could view
The varied freedom that it lately knew,
When soaring heaven-ward, 'mid the azure air,
Through clouds sun-gilded, rolling grandly there;
With lightning glance, on earth's mapp'd scenes below
Rich vales of verdure, mountains crown'd with snow;

So my wild spirit reckless spurn'd the rule,
The art-forged chains, the discipline of school.
Books could not teach, and words could never show
The voidless rapture Nature can bestow!
Oft have I hail'd, with flushing fond delight,
The day that gave her treasures to my sight,
And oft have stolen a solitary hour
Of giddy worship to her soul-fraught power.
But my strange heart confess'd its folly still,
And mourn'd to wrong another's worthier will:
It felt that eye so anxious to perceive
Mine bent on learning—and it could but grieve.
Wilt thou forgive the pain I gave thee then?
Boyhood is wayward—now we *both* are men,—
The light of thunder's flash'd upon my mind,
Storms of young life have left me wreck'd behind.

Deep floods of feeling, eloquently strong,
Rush on my heart and bear my soul along ;
The nervous majesty of thought's command,
Sublimely passion'd, and serenely grand,
With Learning's magic, rules my spirit now ;
I hear with wonder, and with praises bow,
And deem not wisdom yet beyond my reach,
Since I could ever learn, if thus you ever teach.

FINIS.

WILLIAMS, PRINTER, DEVONPORT.

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